

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1134
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY QUITO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 6629

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ECIN, PBOR, PGOV
SUBJECT: THE AMAZON PACT

REF: (A) STATE 180478, (B) LIMA 6085

SUMMARY: THERE HAS BEEN SCANT PUBLIC INTEREST HERE IN THE
AMAZON PACT AND THE GOP APPEARS TO EXPECT LITTLE CONCRETE
FROM IT OVER THE NEAR TERM. THE PERUVIANS ARE INTERESTED
IN THE PROSPECT OF CONSULTATION AND COOPERATION ON PROTEC-
TION OF THE ECOLOGY OF THE AMAZON BASIN. OTHERWISE, PERU
ALREADY HAS SATISFACTORY AGREEMENTS ON RIVER NAVIGATION
WITH BRAZIL AND COLOMBIA, WHILE THE PACT OFFERS NOTHING
NEW IN TERMS OF THE QUARREL WITH ECUADOR. NEITHER SIGNI-
FICANT GROWTH-IN CROSS BORDER TRADE NOR IMPORTANT JOINT
DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN THE AMAZON BASIN SEEM LIKELY IN VIEW OF
PERU'S URGENT DESPERATE FINANCIAL SITUATION. THE PACT
IS, HOWEVER, MOST CONSISTENT WITH THE EMPHASIS THIS GOP
HAS GIVEN TO IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH BRAZIL IN
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PARTICULAR. END SUMMARY.

1. THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE DISCREPANCY PUBLIC REACTION TO
PERU'S SIGNING OF THE AMAZON PACT OTHER THAN THAT NOTED
IN REFTEL (B). AN EDITORIAL IN THE GOP-OWNED "LA
CRONICA" OF JULY 11 HAILD THE PACT AS A "FRAMEWORK OF
PRINCIPLES" WITHIN WHICH REGIONAL COOPERATION, EITHER

ON A MULTILATERAL OR BILATERAL BASIS, CAN BE ACHIEVED. THE EDITORIAL EMPHASIZES THAT THE PACT IS BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF ABSOLUTE RESPECT FOR THE SOVEREIGNTY AND INTEGRITY OF THE SIGNATORY NATIONS, THAT THERE IS A CONSENSUS ON THE NEED TO ACHIEVE HARMONIOUS DEVELOPMENT IN THE AMAZON BASIN, AND THAT THE AGREEMENT DOES NOT FAVOR ANY ONE COUNTRY OVER THE OTHERS.

2. PRIVATELY THE GOP APPEARS MODERATLY PLEASED WITH THE AGREEMENT BUT WITHOUT EXPECTATION OF MUCH IN THE WAY OF NEAR-TERM CONCRETE RESULTS. AMBASSADOR HERBERT WIELAND, WHO WAS THE PRICIPAL PERUVIAN NEGOTIATION ON THE PACT, TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT THE GOP WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN THE ECOLOGICAL ASPECT, SEEING IN THIS INITIATIVE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR CONSULATION AND COOPERATION IN PROTECTION OF THE AMAZON BASIN'S ECOLOGY. WIELAND INDICATED THAT AGGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS IN THE BRAZILIAN AREA, PARTICULARY BY PRIVATE FOREIGN INVESTORS (READ LUDWIG) HAD CAUSED SOME CONCERN HERE ABOUT POSSIBLE ECOLOGICAL DAMAGE.

3. WIELAND REMARKED THAT HIS PRINCIPAL NEGOTIATING TASK HAD BEEN TO ASSURE THAT THE AGREEMENT DID NOT DETRACT FROM THE ANDEAN PACT WHERE PERU'S INTEGRATION EFFORTS ARE CONCENTRATED. FOR THIS REASON, THE PERUVIANS INSISTED THAT THE LANGUAGE OF THE AGREEMENT DEAL WITH CONFIDENTIAL

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"COOPERATION" AND AVOID THE TERM "INTEGRATION". ADDITIONALLY, THE PERUVIANS OPPOSED INCLUSION OF SPECIFIC MEASURES IN THE PACT TO LIBERALIZE CROSS-BORDER TRADE (PRESUMABLY PROPOSED BY BRAZIL). THE GOP SUBSIDIZES FOOD AND OTHER PRODUCTS SOLD TO PERUVIANS IN THE AMAZON REGION AND WOULD WISH TO EXAMINE ANY SPECIFIC TRADE LIBERALIZATION PROPOSALS CAREFULLY IN THAT LIGHT.

4. NEAR TERM OPERATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE PACT FOR PERU SEEMS MINIMAL (PARA 3 REF A). PERU ALREADY HAS WHAT APPEAR TO BE MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY RIVER NAVIGATION AGREEMENTS WITH BRAZIL AND COLOMBIA. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF PETROLEUM EXPORTS FROM THE JUNGLE FIELDS PERU'S RIVER TRADE VIA THE AMAZON IS NOT PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT. THE PACT IS NOT LIKELY TO PRODUCE A BILATERAL AGREEMENT ON RIVER NAVIGATION WITH ECUADOR, GIVERN THE LATTER COUNTRY'S REJECTION OF THE RIO PROTOCOL. THE GOP POSITION VIS-A-VIS ECUADOREAN ACCESS TO THE AMAZON CONTINUES TO BE THAT SUCH ACCESS, ON THE SAME TERMS AS THAT ENJOYED BY COLOMBIA, IS GUARANTEED BY THE RIO PROTOCOL, AND THAT ECUADOR, FOR INTERNAL

POLITICAL REASONS, IS UNWILLING TO MAKE SUCH ACCESS EFFECTIVE.

5. PROSPECTS FOR PERUVIAN RATIFICATION OF THE PACT ARE UNCERTAIN. GIVEN THE LONG RANGE NATURE OF THE PACT, AND INGRAINED PERUVIAN SENSITIVITY TO PERCEIVED THREATS TO ITS AMAZON TERRITORY, THE GOP MIGHT DECIDE TO LET THE CONSTITUTIONAL REGIME SCHEDULED FOR OFFICE IN 1980 TAKE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR RATIFICATION.

6. IN GENERAL, THE PACT IS UNLIKELY TO TAKE ON MUCH IMPORTANCE FOR PERU IN THE YEARS IMMEDIATELY AHEAD. THIS COUNTRY DOES NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES IN CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES TO ATTEMPT A SUBSTANTIAL DEVELOPMENT
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DRIVE IN ITS AMAZON TERRITORIES. OVER THE LONGER RANGE, HOWEVER, THE PACT COULD OPEN POSSIBILITIES FOR SIGNIFICANT COOPERATION. PERUVIANS DO FEEL THAT THEY HAVE AN HISTORIC COMMITMENT TO THE DEFENSE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR AMAZON TERRITORIES. THERE HAS LONG BEEN A TENDENCY HERE TO CULTIVATE PERU'S AMAZONIC IMAGE, DESPITE THE ENORMOUS DIFFICULTIES OF PHYSICAL INTEGRATION BETWEEN THE COAST AND THE RIVER BASIN. BELAUNDE'S SCHEME FOR A TRANS-AMAZON HIGHWAY, REACHING FROM THE ECUADOREAN TO THE BOLIVAN BORDER, REMAINS THE MOST DRAMATIC EXAMPLE OF THIS COUNTRY'S PREOCCUPATION WITH THAT REGION.

7. IT SHOULD ALSO BE NOTED THAT THE AMAZON PACT IS CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT PERUVIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND PARTICULARLY FOREIGN MINISTER DE LA PUENTE'S EMPHASIS ON STRENGTHENING RELATIONS WITH THIS COUNTRY'S KEY NEIGHBORS. HE IS SHARPLY CRITICAL IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION OF THE VELASCO REGIME'S IDEOLOGICAL HOSTILITY TOWARD BRAZIL WHICH HE SAW AS THREATENING PERU WITH A DANGEROUS ISOLATION IN THIS REGION. SINCE COMING TO OFFICE HE HAS EMPHASIZED IMPROVING THE BRAZILIAN RELATIONSHIP. THE MINISTER IS MUCH LESS IMPRESSED THAN TRADITIONAL PERUVIAN FOREIGN POLICY THINKERS WITH THE VALUE OF A STRONG ARGENTINE CONNECTION. HE REGARDS THAT COUNTRY AS UNSTABLE AND AN UNRELIABLE ALLY WHICH, AS HE REMARKED ONCE TO THE AMBASSADOR, HAS "NEVER DONE ANYTHING FOR PERU". DE LA PUENTE APPEARS LESS CONCERNED THAN MANY OF HIS COUNTRYMEN ABOUT THE PURPORTED THREAT OF BRAZILIAN EXPANSIONISM BUT SHOWED HIMSELF SENSITIVE TO THOSE FEARS IN THE DEFENSIVE NATURE OF HIS TV REMARKS ON THE AMAZON PACT (REF B).

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